

## Module 9

# Seizures



### Learning Outcomes

Pupils will learn:

- what a seizure is and why it happens;
- how to recognise seizures;
- how to care for someone who is having a seizure; and
- how to look after someone when the seizure stops.



### Resources

- NHSCT Video of a [tonic-clonic seizure](#)
- Skills card 9: Helping Someone Who is Having a Seizure
- PowerPoint on Seizures.



### Teaching Notes

#### Tonic-Clonic Seizure

**A tonic-clonic seizure is a type of seizure which is a medical emergency.**

- Show the NHSCT video of a tonic-clonic seizure. A casualty having a tonic-clonic seizure loses consciousness, experiences stiffening (tonic) and twitching or jerking (clonic) phases of muscle activity. Emphasise that a tonic-clonic seizure is only one type of seizure and that seizures can have many causes.
- Ask your pupils to share their thoughts and observations about the video. Watch the video with the class again, if necessary.
- Explain how to recognise when someone is having a seizure. For example, the person may:
  - become unresponsive;
  - experience stiffening body and limbs;
  - jerk or arch their back;
  - have noisy and/or shallow breathing;
  - have a pale face and blue lips;
  - have rolling or staring eyes;
  - lose control of their bladder or bowels; and/or
  - foam at the mouth or bite their tongue (the excessive saliva may be bloodstained, this should not be a cause for alarm).

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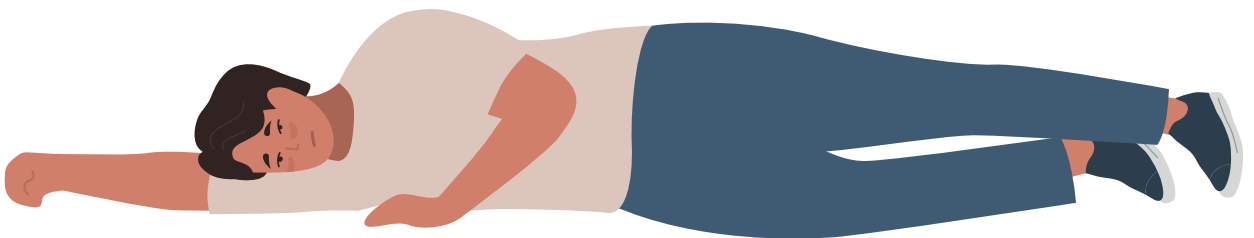


### How to help someone who is having a seizure

Explain to your pupils that:

- The first thing to do when a casualty is having a seizure is to call for help.
- They must **not** restrain the casualty in any way.
- They must **not** move the casualty unless they are in danger.
- They must **not** put anything in the casualty's mouth. There is a myth that the casualty may swallow their tongue, but this is untrue.
- They should move any obstacles or furniture so the casualty does not hurt themselves during the seizure.
- They should, if necessary, move the casualty away from harm and place something soft, such as a coat, under the casualty's head to prevent injury.
- They should talk reassuringly to the casualty, even if the casualty doesn't seem to hear them.
- After a seizure the casualty's muscles relax and breathing returns to normal.
- The casualty will regain consciousness within a few minutes.
- The casualty may be dazed, confused or acting strangely.
- The casualty will usually feel tired and may want to sleep.
- Once the casualty has stopped jerking, they should place them into the recovery position.

Use Skills card 9: Helping Someone Who is Having a Seizure.



### Causes of Seizures

Explain to your pupils that seizures can have many causes. Epilepsy is only one potential cause. Others include:

- fainting;
- diabetes;
- an underlying cardiac condition;
- a brain tumour;
- a psychological cause; or
- alcohol or drugs.

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### When to call an ambulance

Call an ambulance by dialling **999** or **112** if:

- there is no adult help available;
- the casualty comes out of the seizure, as it is still important for them to be checked for any underlying cause for the seizure;
- the casualty clearly has an injury;
- the casualty's appearance concerns you (again this will depend on the setting and whether any adults or other help is available); or
- the casualty does not appear to be breathing or you have concerns about their level of consciousness after the seizure has stopped.



### Extension Ideas

#### Learning for life and work (Personal Development, Citizenship)

- Ask your pupils for ideas on how they would make the area safe for someone who has a seizure in their classroom.
- Discuss with your pupils how they would make the area safe and protect the dignity of someone who has a seizure outside or in a public place.
- Encourage your pupils to investigate other types of epileptic seizure that do not need medical attention, for example absence or focal seizures.